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United States Department of the Interior, Stewart L. Udall, Secretary
Fish and Wildlife Service, Clarence F. Pautzke, Commissioner

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JAPAN'S AGAR-AGAR INDUSTRY

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Domestic Production of Gelidium

Japan's production of domestic gelidium, a seaweed used in the manufacture of agar-agar, has decreased sharply since 1958. Production of fresh gelidium in that year amounted to 16,559 metric tons. In 1959 production dropped to 14,008 metric tons and to 12,274 metric tons in 1960. For the first half of 1961 (January-June) the domestic harvest was 4,569 metric tons.

Because of the short supply of this seaweed domestic (dried) gelidium prices have soared in the past four years. The average price per pound ($US) was $.27 (1958), $.46 (1959), $.66 (1960), and $.64 (1961, January-June).

Gelidium Imports

Imports of gelidium to Japan have increased steadily since 1958. During the period 1958-1961 Japan has imported gelidium from twenty-nine countries with samples received from one country. In 1958, imports totaled 3,569 metric tons, of which 2,482 MT or 69% was supplied by South Korea; China Mainland 241 MT, Singapore 101 MT, Denmark 437 MT and South Africa 248 MT were other principal suppliers. In 1959 gelidium imports totaled 4,198 metric tons with South Korea supplying 2,649 MT or 63% of total imports. Major supplies were also received from Thailand 380 MT, Denmark 222 MT, South Africa 480 MT, and Argentina 100 MT. In 1960, Japan imported 5,536 metric tons of gelidium with South Korea again being the principal supplier with 2,822 metric tons or approximately 50% of the total. In the first half of 1961 (January-October) Japan's imports of gelidium totaled

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6,131 metric tons. Principal suppliers were: Portugal 1,492 MT, Chile 1,592 MT, Argentina 1,285 MT, Yugoslavia 464 MT, South Africa 331 MT, Denmark 184 MT, Indonesia 147 MT, Peru 132 MT, France 115 MT, Thailand 109 MT.

The Japanese Agar-Agar Exporters' Association reported that since 1960 the South Korean Government has prohibited the sale of gelidium to Japan.

Import Price Trends of Gelidium

Import prices (per pound $US) of gelidium to Japan by selected countries follows: South Korea: 1958 (not available); 1959 - $.15; 1960 - $.13; 1961 (n.a.). Portugal: 1959 - $.15; 1960 - $.17; 1961 - $.24. Chile: 1959 - $.19 1960 - $.20; 1961 - $.21. South Africa: 1958 (n.a.); 1959 - $.17; 1960 - $.32; 1961 - $.19. U.S.: Only figure available $.46 for 1961; Indonesia: 1961 - $.17; Argentina: 1961 - $.16. Average price for other countries 1959 - $.17; 1960 - $.23; 1961 - $.24. All quotations (f.o.b.) country of origin.

Exports of Domestic Gelidium

There have been no exports of gelidium from Japan.

Domestic Agar-Agar Production

Domestic production of agar-agar follows: 1958 - 2,026 MT comprised 1,663 natural and 363 powdered; 1959 - 2,090 MT comprised 1,705 natural and 385 powdered; 1960 - 2,174 MT comprised 1,547 natural and 627 powdered and in 1961 production is estimated at 2,620 MT made up of 1,940 natural and 680 powdered product.

Exports of Agar-Agar

Japan's exports of agar-agar for the past four years by quantity and value follows: 1958 - 661 MT, $1,801,706; 1959 - 725 MT, $1,930,178; 1960 - 500 MT, $1,882,786. For the first six months of 1961 exports totaled 335 MT, $1,390,089. Included in these figures are exports of powdered agar-agar in the following amounts: 1958 - 29 MT, $87,253; 1959 - 137 MT, $369,731; 1960 - 35 MT, $138,167; and for the first half of 1961 - 16 MT, $81,714. All values based $US.

Agar-Agar Inventory

The carry over of agar-agar from 1960 to 1961 amounted to 150 metric tons. It is reported that these stocks were of inferior quality.

Domestic Agar-Agar Price Trends

Japan's domestic agar-agar price trends (per pound $US) from 1958 to 1961 were: 1958 - $1.35; 1959 - $1.52; 1960 - $1.92; 1961 - $1.96. These

increased prices are attributable to the high prices paid for the raw material and increased costs of production.

Export Price Trends of Agar-Agar

Japan's export prices for agar-agar have risen significantly since 1958 and 1959. In 1958 the average export price was $1.22 per pound and $1.20 in 1959. Prices increased sharply in 1960 to $1.71, and again in 1961 to $1.86.

Japan has augmented its supply of agar-agar by imports from South Korea. Quantity and values are: 1958 - 157 MT, $343,119; 1959 - 154 MT, $325,544; 1960 - 65 MT, $206,442; and in 1961 (January-June) 47 MT, $174,833. (values $US). In 1960 South Korean export price for agar-agar to Japan was $1.10 per pound ($US) and $1.70 in 1961 (f.o.b. South Korea).

Japan's Production and Average Gelidium Price, 1958-1961
(Metric tons)

	Fresh	Dried	Average Price[1] (Dried)
1958	16,559	7,582	$ .266
1959	14,008	5,145	.457
1960	12,274	5,691	.665
1961	4,569	n.a.	.640

(1) Price per pound $US

Japan's Imports of Gelidium 1958-1961
(Metric Tons)

	1958	1959	1960	1961 (1)
South Korea	2,482	2,649	2,822	0
Chile	0	16	922	1,592
Portugal	0	71	145	1,492
Argentina	0	100	295	1,285
Yugoslavia	0	0	0	464
South Africa	248	480	328	331
Denmark	437	222	267	184
Indonesia	0	27	361	147
Peru	0	0	0	132
France	0	0	0	115
Thailand	15	380	51	109
Singapore	101	0	12	45
Egypt	0	0	84	35
Malaya	4	87	5	30
South Vietnam	0	0	41	25
Arab Union	0	0	0	20
Ceylon	0	0	8	19
Ryukyus	31	86	33	18
Formosa	0	32	27	16
U.K.	0	0	27	15
Philippines	0	0	4	13
Mexico	0	0	0	11
N. Borneo	10	22	14	10
U.S.	0	0	9	10
Hong Kong	0	26	21	7
Brazil	0	0	0	6
China Mainland	241	0	26	0
Morroco	0	0	33	0
Zanzbar	0	0	1	0
Italy	0	Sample	0	0
Total	3,569	4,198	5,536	6,131

(1) January 1-October 31

Average Import Price Gelidium to Japan, 1958-1961
(Per Pound $US f.o.b. Country of Origin)

Country of Origin	1958	1959	1960	1961
South Korea	n.a.(1)	$.146	$.132	$ --
Portugal	--	.146	.171	.239
Chile	--	.188	.197	.215
S. Africa	n.a.	.168	.318	.190
U.S.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	.459
Indonesia	--	n.a.	n.a.	.168
Argentina	--	n.a.	n.a.	.164
Other Countries	n.a.	.167	.229	.239

(1) n.a. - Not available

Japan's Agar-Agar Production 1958-1961
(in Metric Tons)

	Natural	Powdered	Total
1958	1,663	363	2,026
1959	1,705	385	2,090
1960	1,547	627	2,174
1961	1,940	680	2,620

Japan's Agar-Agar Domestic & Export Price Trends, 1958-1961 (1)

	Domestic	Export
1958	$1.35	$1.22
1959	1.52	1.20
1960	1.92	1.71
1961	1.96	1.86

(1) Per pound $US - Export Price f.o.b. Japan

NOTE: On December 20, 1961, price per pound low grade $1.85 - high grade $1.95

Japan's Imports Agar-Agar, 1958-1961

	Strip		Powdered		Total	
1958	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
Korea	157	343,119	--	--	157	343,119
U.S.	Negligible	19	Negligible	100	Negligible	19
Total	157	343,138	Negligible	100	157	343,238
1959						
Korea	154	325,544	--	--	154	325,544
U.S.	--	--	Negligible	128	Negligible	128
Total	154	325,544	Negligible	128	154	325,672
1960						
Korea	65	206,331	--	--	65	206,331
U.S.	--	--	Negligible	111	Negligible	111
Total	65	206,331	Negligible	111	65	206,442
Jan-June 1961						
Korea	47	174,833	--	--	47	174,833
U.S.	--	--	Negligible	147	Negligible	147
Total	47	174,833	Negligible	147	47	174,980

NOTE: In Metric Tons - Value $US

(1)

Japan's Exports Agar-Agar, 1959

Country	Square		Strip		Powdered		Total	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
Ryukyus	4	11,400	0.3	1,147	Negligible	481	4.3	13,028
Philippines	16	36,186	1	2,667	--	--	17	38,853
Burma	Negligible	200	7	18,750	--	--	7	18,750
United Kingdom	1	3,303	83	216,467	74	183,692	158	403,462
Netherlands	1	4,969	18	45,439	3	7,122	22	57,530
Canada	0.2	658	12	36,761	2	5,983	14.2	43,402
United States	3	12,220	33	80,730	44	127,989	80	220,939
Australia	Negligible	28	4	14,689	2	6,372	6	21,089
Hong Kong	--	--	9	23,164	--	--	9	23,164
South Vietnam	--	--	11	26,497	--	--	11	26,497
Thailand	--	--	62	163,711	Negligible	3	62	163,714
Malaya	--	--	42	94,203	--	--	42	94,203
Singapore	--	--	76	184,253	--	--	76	184,253
India	--	--	12	35,528	Negligible	433	12	35,961
Lebanon	--	--	10	27,919	--	--	10	27,919
Denmark	--	--	5	12,178	--	--	5	12,178
France	--	--	14	31,161	2	4,036	16	35,197
West Germany	--	--	54	149,686	3	7,933	57	157,619
Switzerland	--	--	9	25,575	Negligible	714	9	26,289
Italy	--	--	32	87,231	--	--	32	87,231
Czechoslovakia	--	--	11	35,178	--	--	11	35,178
Argentina	--	--	10	33,406	--	--	10	33,406
Puerto Rico	--	--	--	--	7	23,714	7	23,714
Venezuela	--	--	16	50,036	--	--	16	50,036
Other Countries	1.8	5,500	29.7	89,607	Negligible	1,259	31.5	96,566
Total	27	74,464	561	1,485,983	137	369,731	725	1,930,178

(1) In metric tons - values $US

Japan's Exports Agar-Agar, 1958(1)

Country	Square		Strip		Powdered		Total	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Valu
Ryukyus	3	8,986	0.2	617	0.1	869	3.3	10,4
Hong Kong	Negligible	6	18	42,637	---	---	18	42,6
Singapore	0.6	1,583	73	187,094	1	1,258	74.6	189,9
Philippines	17.6	52,081	1	2,664	---	---	18.6	54,7
Netherlands	0.3	794	19	54,128	0.4	1,581	19.7	56,5
Finland	0.6	1,669	5	14,606	0.2	572	5.8	16,8
Canada	0.2	828	11	30,314	---	---	11.2	31,1
United States	2	5,936	35	91,317	16	47,575	53	144,8
Peru	0.1	639	3	10,844	---	---	3.1	11,4
Brazil	2	8,542	5	14,339	0.1	361	7.1	23,2
China Mainland	---	---	41	121,992	---	---	41	121,9
South Vietnam	---	---	13	34,000	---	---	13	34,0
Thailand	---	---	38	102,719	Negligible	244	38	102,9
Malaya	---	---	6	15,464	---	---	6	15,4
Burma	---	---	13	34,158	0.2	444	13.2	34,6
India	---	---	11	31,197	0.4	1,581	11.4	32,7
Israel	---	---	6	16,261	---	---	6	16,2
Sweden	---	---	5	14,692	---	---	5	14,6
Denmark	---	---	8	22,086	---	---	8	22,0
United Kingdom	---	---	101	278,403	8	24,358	109	302,7
France	---	---	30	67,853	---	---	30	67,8
West Germany	---	---	78	207,306	---	---	78	207,3
Italy	---	---	41	110,469	0.4	1,181	41.4	111,6
Australia	---	---	7	21,425	2	6,319	9	27,7
Venezuela	---	---	11	31,286	---	---	11	31,2
Other Countries	Negligible	628	26.8	74,890	0.2	910	27	76,4
Total	26.4	81,692	606	1,632,761	29	87,253	661.4	1,801,7

(1) In metric tons - values based $US

Japan's Exports Agar-Agar, 1961 (January-June) (1)

Country	Square		Strip		Powdered		Total	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
Ryukyus	5	18,317	1	4,594	Negligible	311	6	23,222
Brazil	2	9,108	2	7,592	0.4	1,100	4.4	17,800
Malaya	0.3	1,344	16	65,250	--	--	16.3	66,594
United States	1	6,286	8	39,178	2	12,995	11	58,459
Peru	0.4	2,119	2	10,533	--	--	2.4	12,652
Netherlands	0.1	481	15	66,671	--	--	15.1	67,152
Canada	Negligible	119	5	19,611	--	--	5	19,730
United Kingdom	Negligible	11	12	50,672	--	--	12	50,683
USSR	--	--	30	134,269	--	--	30	134,269
Hong Kong	--	--	20	64,397	--	--	20	64,397
South Vietnam	--	--	3	12,694	--	--	3	12,694
Thailand	--	--	47	203,190	Negligible	308	47	203,498
Singapore	--	--	26	113,117	1.6	8,533	27.6	121,650
Burma	--	--	3	13,931	--	--	3	13,931
India	--	--	5	23,517	--	--	5	23,517
France	--	--	4	14,739	1	2,114	5	16,853
West Germany	--	--	37	114,678	0.4	2,464	37.4	117,142
Italy	--	--	45	192,664	1	2,669	46	195,333
Australia	--	--	2	6,842	3	14,503	5	21,345
Puerto Rico	--	--	--	--	7	34,506	7	34,506
Other Countries	0.2	1,562	27	110,889	Negligible	2,211	27.2	114,662
Total	9	39,347	310	1,269,028	16.4	81,714	335.4	1,390,089

(1) In metric tons - values based $US

Japan's Exports Agar-Agar, 1960(1)

Country	Square		Strip		Powdered		Total	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
Ryukyus	4	15,267	0.2	678	--	--	4.2	15,945
Malaya	1	2,672	47	166,644	--	--	48	169,316
Philippines	9	21,200	5	10,572	1	2,478	15	34,250
United Kingdom	0.4	1,606	51	187,406	4	14,819	55.4	203,831
Netherlands	1	4,322	17	64,106	--	--	18	68,428
Czechoslovakia	12	49,044	21	86,322	--	--	33	135,366
Canada	0.2	858	7	25,397	2	5,569	9.2	31,824
United States	2	10,900	11	40,972	9	41,472	22	93,344
Brazil	3	8,906	3	12,531	--	--	6	21,437
USSR	--	--	10	39,906	--	--	10	39,906
Hong Kong	--	--	4	17,119	--	--	4	17,119
South Vietnam	--	--	11	38,664	--	--	11	38,664
Thailand	--	--	72	266,808	--	--	72	266,808
Singapore	--	--	24	84,542	1	10,153	25	94,695
Burma	--	--	12	46,061	--	--	12	46,061
India	--	--	15	58,903	0.2	1,078	15.2	59,981
Saudi Arabia	--	--	4	15,183	--	--	4	15,183
Denmark	--	--	3	10,439	--	--	3	10,439
Belgium	--	--	9	36,200	--	--	9	36,200
France	--	--	10	35,850	0.4	1,175	10.4	37,025
West Germany	--	--	34	129,183	6	23,422	40	152,605
Italy	--	--	24	103,222	--	--	24	103,222
Cuba	--	--	4	17,139	--	--	4	17,139
Venezuela	--	--	14	59,953	--	--	14	59,953
Australia	--	--	3	11,994	3	15,250	6	27,244
Puerto Rico	--	--	--	--	3	11,492	3	11,492
Other Countries	0.4	1,544	16.8	62,056	5.4	11,709	31.6	75,309
Total	33	116,319	432	1,627,850	35	138,617	500	1,882,786

(1) In metric tons - values $US